DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 317 463 SO 020 633

AUTHOR Lynn, Karen
TITLE Placing Racism "At Risk": Involving 9-12 Students in Research.
PUB DATE 89
NOTE 15p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Controversial Issues (Course Content); Curriculum Enrichment; *Learning Modules; *Racial Attitudes; Racial Bias; Racial Discrimination; *Racial Relations; Secondary Education; Social Studies; *Teacher Developed Materials

ABSTRACT

Designed to be incorporated in the secondary social studies curriculum, this teacher-developed learning module focuses on the issue of racism. The objectives include student definition and identification of racism and formulation of ideas and strategies to resolve the problem. The packet includes a teacher to student introduction of the unit and its objectives, a student study sheet, a vocabulary list, homework assignments, and questions for students to answer based on their readings, a sample survey for students to complete, and directions to the teacher. (JB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED317463

Placing Racism "At Risk":

Involving 9-12 Students in Research

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

by

Karen Lynn, B.A., M.ED., ED.S., PH.D.

Florida Department of Education Program Specialist

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
KAREN LYNN
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Residence: 15003 Morning Drive
Lutz, Florida 33549
813-977-7287
Office: 813-355-8855

SO 020 633

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract:

This paper offers background information in the way of student and community perspectives of the social issue of racism, with suggested instructional techniques resulting in student definition, identifcation, and research of/on the subject.

Development of this project began while the author was a World History Instructor at Boca Raton Community High School, Florida.

The instructional unit includes teacher to student introduction of topic (objectives), a student study sheet with vocabulary identification, a student self-evaluation form, research assignments, directions to the teacher for presentation of the unit, and follow-up suggestions. "Placing Racism 'At Risk'" is designed to be incorporated within the Social Studies curriculum. The vocabulary list was developed to enable the student to become familiar with terms associated with racism, as well as, normally included in the social studies. The content material and learning activities were developed to enhance study skills and to provide practice in research, in conjuction with teacher introduction and discussion leadership.

The teacher-developed unit coupled with effective professional strategies and direction, provides contemporary social problem identification in association with history studies.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher to Students:

When you think about racism, you automatically think of a selected aspect of racism: perhaps black, perhaps white, perhaps slavery, perhaps hate, perhaps crime, and (etc.). You may have a single thought of racism, ignoring all aspects of it. This may have led you to a narrow perception or an uncomfortable emotion about a person of another race. What we will attempt in this exercise is for you to become aware of your feelings and adapt your responses in an appropriate manner. Our objectives are:

1. To define racism.
2. To provide a variety of activities related to racism, in order that you can readily identify it.
3. To provide an opportunity for you and I to share ideas and strategies toward the resolution of problems, questions and concerns affecting an elimination of racism.
4. To provide an opportunity for you to increase your awareness of your potential in developing a cooperative effort challenging racism in your community.

STUDENT STUDY SHEET

In spite of a Christian-based national philosophy, a civil war, several presidents initiating social legislation, and court-ordered integration, racism exists within the U.S. society, a "neo-segregationalism" (unlawful, but emotionally acceptable), exampled by non-mixed neighborhoods, housing "projects", and a minute percentage of intermarried citizens. Thomas H. Poole, Florida president of the NAACP has stated: "Racism is alive and well in America." (St. Petersburg Times, September 4, 1988)

The prerequisite of a correct strategy to defeat this "neo-segregationalism" is the ability of community, state, and national leaders to willingly accept the responsibility of discovering and exposing "neo-segregationalism". This premise is supported by Perkins T. Shelton, Director of Branch Affairs for the St. Petersburg, Florida Chapter of the NAACP: "I think it's (racism) going to get worse before it gets better until we can turn this thing around and until we can get a change in governmental attitudes at the national level." (St. Petersburg Times, September 4, 1988)

Legislation has helped diffuse overt physical and verbal resistance to integration, but citizens would be hard-pressed to declare segregation a philosophy of the past. This statement is supported from the following statements of students, a pupil population from an affluent area of Palm Beach County, Florida, from a high school where approximately 70% indicate they are college-bound, from those very young persons who have the opportunities and incentive to reach positions of leadership.

The first set of quotes identify racism as a continual problem within U.S. society, from "myopia" to intermarriage:

Brandon: People paint a real pretty picture of black and whites holding hands and loving and caring for one another, and I wish this could be true, but it's time to face the facts and be realistic. As long as there is prejudice, there will be segregation.

Dan: If they (blacks) expect to be accepted and integrated into our society, they have to try to conform.

Melissa: I see no difference in the blacks. When people (whites) get a dark tan, do people hate them? Why not? They have dark skin too. If blacks could go out into the sun and turn white, would we still be prejudiced?

Ken: I guarantee if every one was put in a dark room with glasses on so you couldn't see, there would be no problem between black and white because people wouldn't know if you are black or white.

Jason: I think racism will change tremendously if we elect a black president.

Bruce: People don't realize how we really won our flag, but if they just look back how, when and who fought for that flag, they should know that we are a team and should get as much respect for one another as we do for our flag, because blacks and whites fought

for that flag and I think it should stay that way.

Caroline: I was asked one day if I would ever marry a black person and I automatically said 'yes'. Then I thought of all the problems that would be associated with marrying a black person. Unfortunately, I decided that I probably would never. Things may change when I get older, but I seriously doubt it.

To recognize that we Americans have a problem is positive. These young citizens are not accepting the "job accomplished" attitude of many adults. These students, desirous of developing a better racial climate, have offered avenues of support through religion:

James: Some people despise black people in their church, but the church I went to, we had black ushers and black people in the audience. Now that's what I call unity.

Mike: But for as long as man has been here, there has been hate between races. I'm sure we could help (end) racism, but I don't think it will ever end. God help us.

and continued social legislation as a means of reaching a "more perfect union":

Beth: In communities there should be a kind of agreement that a certain amount of people of the black race should be able to live there.

Sachin: Above everything else, physical exposure to each other will do the most good. Being in the same room with another person of a

separate color is the most concrete form of awareness. In this situation, an individual gets to talk with and understand his counterpart.

Erin: The only way to get rid of discrimination in this area (employment) would be to have all applicants apply by phone.

This next generation of leaders acknowledge that there is a racial problem:

Jessica: Racism is still an evident problem and unless this nation accepts, it will continue to be a problem.

Mike: There is no doubt that racism still exists. It is not just between whites and blacks. There is racism between and against Jew, Polish, and Chinese.

that there is still a need for citizens to involve themselves, to make concerted efforts to outreach to one another. They want an America that is non-prejudiced and non-discriminatory. In the St. Petersburg Times article, reasons for the "racial problems throughout Florida and the nation run gamut":

Some experts blame the American populace for a complacency during this decade. Others say the Reagan administration has financed a military buildup at the expense of social programs. Still others wonder if rapid shifts in the nation's economy have brought troubling changes in the American social fabric.

STUDENT VOCABULARY STUDY SHEET

Define:

1) Christian
2) philosophy
3) civil war
4) social
5) legislation
6) integration
7) racism
8) neo
9) segregation
10) NAACP
11) overt
12) myopia
13) intermarriage
14) prejudice
15) conform
16) discrimination

STUDENT SELF-GUIDANCE: QUESTIONS FROM READING

1. What social problem is identified in the reading?

   (racism)

2. The students formed ideas of what to do about racism. List four examples.

   (answers will vary, ie, cultural conformity, election of black president, history studies, integration of churches, integration of communities, personal effort to meet those of "color", employment interviews via telephone)

3. Write your definition of racism.

   (answers will vary)

4. How can you adapt your behavior in order that you do not contribute to racism?

   (answers will vary, ie, stop usage of discriminatory language; make an effort to meet people of different races; extend invitations to my church and home; etc.)

5. Homework. Choose one:

   1. Prepare an oral and written book report based upon an aspect of racism.
   2. For one week, collect newspaper and magazines articles illustrative of racism. Place in notebook or construct poster display.
   3. Survey a sample population in regard to their ideas and experiences of/with racism.

Homework:

Suggested survey or encourage student to develop her/his own:

IS RACISM AT-RISK AT _____ SCHOOL?

Sample person # ____

Answer yes or no

_____1. Does the school staff have the same racial and social background as the families in the school?

_____2. Do the teachers and students know kinds and percentages of different families represented at the school?

_____3. Do the teachers and students know kinds and number of different families in the community?

_____4. Have the teachers identified personal prejudices and worked toward eliminating discriminatory behavior?

_____5. Has the school conducted a student survey previous to this to assess racial attitudes?

_____6. Is there a soical orientation for incoming teachers, students and their families?

_____7. Does the school have a recognized resource person to address racial/social conflict?

_____8. Has the school scheduled sensitivity workshops on racial-cultural concerns?

_____9. Do teachers make home visits to families of a different race than their own?

____10. Have teachers, students, and staff recognized racial/cultural diversity through social diffusion, i.e., cafeteria foods, holiday/religious displays, media acquisition, music and poetry PA morning excerpts?

____11. Do teachers and students greet all persons in a courteous manner?

_____12. Has the principal helped parents to invite each other to neighborhood home-get-to-gethers for issues discussion (i.e., drugs, grades, health, homework, etc.)?

If you wish to comment further on any of the above questions, please identify the question number and your comment in the following space:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you.

DIRECTIONS TO THE TEACHER

Educators, parents, and the business community have placed the economically disadvantaged, migrants, drop-outs, teenage mothers, "at risk". Our society, as it is apparently increasing its culturally diversity, is "at risk". Our students have been excellent pupils -- they recognize that the United States history based on Christian values often contradicts those values in yesterday's, as well as, today's United States. Public schools are individual composites of the United States.From your class, begin a study of racism with the Student Study Sheet, in combination with the Student Vocabulary Study Sheet.

Assign, for completion and discussion, Student Self-Guidance: Questions From Reading.

Homework:

Work with student-researchers as they examine their data, encouraging those students to answer "why". Example: In February 1989, the University of South Florida's student newspaper, the Oracle, printed an ad for a local club entitled,"The Dead Don't Dance", a picture of a man lynched. An immediate outcy was raised by black students, amidst denials of racism from the newspaper's staff whose contention was that since the victim's head was covered, how could anyone know he was black? Certainly, a lack of sensitivity by some, and painfully apparent, that during Black History Month, University staff were insensitive or unaware of the implications of such an ad. An apology was later published.

Follow-up:

Expand the teacher-class group to include parents, focusing on from school indices to the community. Present these findings to professional organizations and public leaders, encouraging studies in other schools and agencies, culminating in a commuity-wide dissemination of identifiers, problematic as well as responsive -- placing racism at risk.

A successful integrated school has a basic characteristic -- the impetus to cross racial barriers. The school is supported by staff, students, parents, and community addressing exceptional goals. This contribution enhances the continuity toward national integration -- the recognition that racism-at-risk requires a cohesive effort for progress. When a racially dispersed community joins together in a consistently sensitive and cooperative effort, our society creates a future not before seen in social history.

REFERENCE

Rogers, David K. "Racial violence on rebound in Florida, experts say", St. Petersburg Times, Section B, page one, Sunday, September 4, 1988.